



AMHERST POLICE DEPARTMENT

21 ACADIA STREET • AMHERST, NOVA SCOTIA • B4H 4W3 • (902) 667-7227 • FAX: (902) 667-0268

Counterfeiting while not as popular as it once was is still a significant problem in Canada. In 2011 there were 52,217 phoney bills passed; a sharp decline from the 552,980 fake bills passed in 2004. What has contributed to this decline? Criminals are finding that using technology to commit financial crimes can be more lucrative than producing counterfeit bills. There has also been an increased partnership with police agencies and the Government of Canada in combating counterfeiting. Lastly, new security features have made it more difficult to produce counterfeit bills. Even with the decline, Amherst residents are urged to help prevent the circulation of counterfeit bills by engaging in these preventative measures.

The government is continually trying to stay one step ahead of the counterfeiters by creating new security features. The new polymer bank notes recently introduced by the Bank of Canada adds new leading edge security features which make them difficult to counterfeit. Raised ink is used on the large number located on each of the bills. The “Bank of Canada” lettering and the shoulders of the portrait is also raised. Each note has a transparent window which includes a metallic portrait and a building in this area. Tilting the note will cause sharp colour changes in the building graphic. The frosted maple leaf window in each polymer note contains hidden numbers that can only be revealed if viewed next to an incandescent light.

Bank notes should be routinely checked by store clerks to make sure they are valid. If you are a store clerk, your first step should be to see how the bill feels in your hands. I don’t know how many times I have heard clerks tell me that they immediately felt suspicious of the bill because of the way it felt. Many fake bills have a “flat” feel to them and are usually printed on paper that does not “*feel right*”. Once you have completed the “*feel test*”, there are the other security features which you can also check. If you suspect a bill is counterfeit, attempt to keep it but only if you feel it is safe to do so. Explain to the customer that you suspect the bill might be counterfeit and you are calling the police as only they can determine if the bill is counterfeit. Remember, the person passing the note may not realize they are passing a suspected counterfeit bill. If the person is cooperative call the Amherst Police Department and request an officer attend to examine the bill. If they become uncooperative or aggressive at any time call 911 immediately, even if an initial “*non-emergency*” call has been made to police. Always note the details of the person passing the note and. Limit the number of people touching the note so that possible fingerprint evidence may be preserved.

As a customer, do not feel insulted because a clerk is checking your note, they are just doing their job. With their vigilance, they may be keeping other counterfeit bills from making its way into your change.

It is important that people be aware of the security features found in the older series of banknotes as well since they will probably be in circulation for several years. Information on the older notes can be found at the Bank of Canada's website at <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/banknotes/bank-note-series/>.

The Amherst Police will also deliver anti-counterfeiting presentations to any businesses in the Amherst area. Please call the Department at 667-8600 if you are interested.